

INDEPENDENT ADVISER ON STANDARDS

Introduction

The Code of Practice for Public Appointments sets out the principles of the public appointment process, which include equal opportunities, selection on merit, and openness and transparency. In keeping with the principles of openness and transparency, information on all appointments must be available on demand from Assembly officials, although the rights of individual candidates to privacy regarding their personal details must be observed. Whilst this appointment is not covered by the Assembly's Code of Practice on Public Appointments, and does not come under the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, the process will follow the same principles of fair and open competition.

The Process

Following consideration by the Committee and with the agreement of the Presiding Officer, the main stages of the process will be as follows:

1. *End November* - Secure Assembly agreement to proceed by means of an Assembly resolution.
2. *Advertise early December and seek nominations.*
3. *Mid-January* – Approximately 4 weeks for applications. Candidates will be asked to submit an application form with their C.V. and be invited to declare any political activities or potential conflicts of interest, such as personal connections with Assembly Members or bodies in receipt of Assembly funds.
4. *Second half of January* - sift the applications. Panel to comprise an independent assessor, Committee Chair, Presiding Officer and Clerk/Deputy Clerk. Candidates will be assessed against the published criteria and will be selected on merit.
5. *Last week of January* - short-listed candidates invited to interview. Committee, First Secretary and Assembly Permanent Secretary notified of candidates.
6. *Early to mid February* – interview panel to comprise the Presiding Officer, the Independent Assessor, Committee Chair and Permanent Secretary assisted by Clerk/Deputy Clerk.
7. *Second half of February* - Preferred candidate and reserve sounded out on appointment terms, etc. Committee notified of preferred candidate.

8. *End February* - Assembly agreement to proceed with appointment of preferred candidate sought by means of a resolution of the Assembly.
9. *Early March* – announcement of the appointment by the Assembly, accompanied by a brief report from the Independent Assessor in a Press Release.
10. *1 April or as soon as may be thereafter* – successful candidate in post.

Remuneration

It is difficult to estimate the volume of work required to be undertaken by the post holder as there is no direct comparison with his / her equivalent in the House of Commons. The workload will be entirely dependent upon the number of complaints which arise. However, we envisage that under normal circumstances the average time commitment should be no more than 1-1.5 days per month. We will of course, be looking for a high calibre professional person (maybe a retired member of the judiciary) and feel that it would be preferable to pay a retaining fee to attract the right level of candidates. We believe the term of appointment should be for 3 years and that the post holder should be paid a retaining fee of £3,000 *per annum* and payments of £300 *per diem*. A total annual cost to the Assembly of around £10,000.

Office of the Presiding Officer